

WHAT IS CLAIMED IS:

1. A foaming agent used for manufacturing a foamed or porous metal, comprising:

5 a foamable powder; and
a coating layer of SiO_2 covering the particle surfaces of the powder.

2. The foaming agent according to claim 1, wherein the powder is of a carbonate.

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3. The foaming agent according to claim 2, wherein the carbonate is CaCO_3 or MgCO_3 .